

Zelle Hofmann Announces 2014 Diversity in Law Scholarship Recipient

August 19, 2014

Zelle Hofmann is pleased to announce Christopher Ortega as the recipient of the firm's Diversity in Law Scholarship for 2014. Ortega will receive a scholarship to be applied towards his law school tuition, fees and text books. He will also be assigned a mentor at the firm for his remaining law school career.

Ortega is a rising second-year law student at the University of Minnesota Law School, where he is a staff writer for the *ABA Journal of Labor and Employment Law*, treasurer of the Latino Law Student Association and vice president of the Saint Thomas More Society. He is also a Certified Student Attorney, which provides him the opportunity to represent clients in district court through a competitive public interest clerkship offered by the Minnesota Justice Foundation.

Ortega, who has a background in teaching and advocating for at-risk minority students, is a Mexican-American who overcame generational poverty in Southern California.

"I am honored to be the recipient of the Zelle Hofmann Diversity in Law Scholarship," said Ortega. "Attending law school comes with financial pressures and my family has made great sacrifices for me to get here. I recognize the significance of this scholarship, because only a few with my background, and no one with my story, gets this kind of opportunity."

Following Ortega's graduation from high school, he attended Vanguard University, where he received a bachelor's degree in history and political science and a master's degree in education. While at Vanguard, he served as student body president and led service project teams to Mexico and China. Upon receiving his undergraduate degree, he taught government and U.S. history at high schools in Southern California. Following his master's program, he served as a U.S. Peace Corps volunteer in the role of English teacher and trainer in Nicaragua at Mother Marie Eugenie High School and the National

Autonomous University of Nicaragua.

Ortega's service at home and abroad, prior to attending law school, provided him experience working with diverse communities and the opportunity to develop a unique skillset in assisting vulnerable populations.

The Diversity in Law Scholarship is the keystone of the firm's Diversity Outreach Plan and was created for first year law students who either (1) are a member of a diverse group that is historically underrepresented in the private practice of law; or (2) demonstrate a long-standing commitment to diversity that will be furthered by award of the scholarship. To learn more about the Diversity in Law Scholarship and Zelle Hofmann's commitment to diversity, please [click here](#).